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United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

FEB 02 1990

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name St. Paul Lutheran Church other names/site number

2. Location

street & number LA HWY 107 city, town Mansura state Louisiana code LA county Avoyelles code 009 zip code 71350

3. Classification

Table with 3 columns: Ownership of Property, Category of Property, and Number of Resources within Property. Includes checkboxes for private/public ownership and building/site/structure/object categories.

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet. Signature of certifying official Leslie Tassin, State Historic Preservation Officer, Dept of Culture, Recreation and Tourism Date January 26, 1990

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet. Signature of commenting or other official Date State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is: Entered in the National Register. determined eligible for the National Register. determined not eligible for the National Register. removed from the National Register. other, (explain:). Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Entered in the National Register

Signature of the Keeper 3/1/90

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/religious structure

RELIGION/religious structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

Gothic Revival

Queen Anne Revival

foundation brickwalls weatherboard

roof asphaltother

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

St. Paul Lutheran Church is a small frame building located in the rural community of Lutherville about two miles north of Mansura. Built in 1916 to replace an earlier building, the church features elements of the Gothic Revival and Queen Anne Revival styles. Alterations have been confined to small rear appendages and the interior.

The three bay gable fronted church has a prominent side wing, yielding an overall "L" shape. A two-stage square entrance tower marks the juncture of the main block and wing. The first stage of the tower is ornamented with mock crenelation (a Gothic Revival holdover), and above this is a smaller square tower with a pyramidal roof. The church's pointed top windows and front door should be viewed as descendants of Gothic Revival arched fenestration. The windows are grouped in a set of three on the front of the main block (a center window flanked by two narrower windows). The panes of glass in the pointed tops and in the front door are divided by thin muntins in a manner suggestive of tracery. The prominent front and side gables are shingled, a holdover Queen Anne Revival treatment.

The rear elevation has a gabled extension that may or may not be original. Older members of the congregation indicate that it was added in the 1920s, but it could just as easily be original, given the architectural evidence. Sometime later this rear extension received a shed roof addition to the side, and a small shed roof addition was made to the rear of the wing. The latter meant losing one of the original pointed top windows. (The pointed top is visible above the shed roof.)

The interior of the church has been modernized to some extent, including a tiled ceiling and paneling. Because the paneling is painted off-white, it is not glaringly modern. The pews are original as are the sliding doors between the main block and the wing. The original flooring on the main block remains visible, while it has been covered with linoleum in the wing. The bagasse board apse and the altar date from the 1920s, according to long-time church members. Also, a new door was cut to lead into one of the shed roof rear additions previously mentioned.

Assessment of Integrity:

St. Paul Lutheran Church is being nominated to the Register because of its important role as a school. There is no question that it would be immediately recognizable to one of the students who attended classes there during the historic period.

 See continuation sheet

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)
education

Period of Significance
1916-late 1930s

Significant Dates
1916-late 1930s

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
N/A

Architect/Builder
unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The St. Paul Lutheran Church is of local educational significance because it represents the only educational opportunity available to local black children from its construction in 1916 through the late 1930s, when it ceased to be a school. Full-term classes were held there initially for grades 1 - 7, with the eighth grade being added in the late 1920s.

The school at St. Paul's must be viewed within its historic context for a full appreciation of its significance. Schools run by religious denominations were among the very few places where blacks could receive a decent education in rural Louisiana from the end of Reconstruction until the post-World War II era. Although there were other educational opportunities available, almost all of them were either of poor quality or of tenuous existence. The home school, where a mother taught groups of neighborhood children, was one alternative. But these only existed sporadically, instruction was not consistent, and the teachers were often poorly educated themselves.

Another alternative was the state-supported school system, such as it was. After Reconstruction, a legislative act provided for a system of separate "public" education for blacks and whites. This was, in effect, more a quasi-public effort because the state provided only a modicum of funding, with local sources providing the building and other necessities. The schools were usually located in churches or lodge buildings, and teachers were poorly qualified. With the retrenchment policies of the day and the general lack of interest in public education, funding was woefully inadequate for even a single school system, let alone the dual system mandated by segregation. From the beginning black schools were generally not treated equally in the distribution of funds, and received an increasingly disproportionate share as white schools grew in number and importance. Also, of course, the notion of educating blacks certainly ran contrary to the racial attitudes of the time.

Indeed, black "public schools" were really not schools at all. Essentially meager public subsidies were used to support quasi-private efforts. As T. H. Harris, State Superintendent of Education from 1908-1940, reported in his autobiography: "In most cases Negro churches were used for schoolhouses, and the

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

School ledger in storage at St. Paul Lutheran Church.

Interviews with various former students, including Irene Gallerson, Priscilla Thompson Price, Margie Thompson Williams, Emilie Greenhouse Young, and Samuel Laurent.

Eakin, Myrtle Sue. "The Black Struggle for Education in Louisiana, 1877-1930s." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Southwestern Louisiana, 1980.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- preliminary determination of Individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

St. Paul Lutheran Church

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property @ 1 acre

UTM References

A

1	5	5	9	0	8	0	0	3	4	3	9	5	0	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

C

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

B

Zone				Easting				Northing						

D

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description Please refer to enclosed sketch map.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

Boundary lines follow property lines on the north, east and south. The western boundary does not follow the property line in order to exclude a non-contributing cemetery.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title National Register Staff

organization Division of Historic Preservation date November 1989

street & number P. O. Box 44247 telephone 504-342-8160

city or town Baton Rouge state LA zip code 70804

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

St. Paul Lutheran Church, Avoyelles Parish, LA

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only equipment in these churches were the benches used for church services. The school term was from two to four months and the teachers were uneducated and wholly unequipped to instruct children."

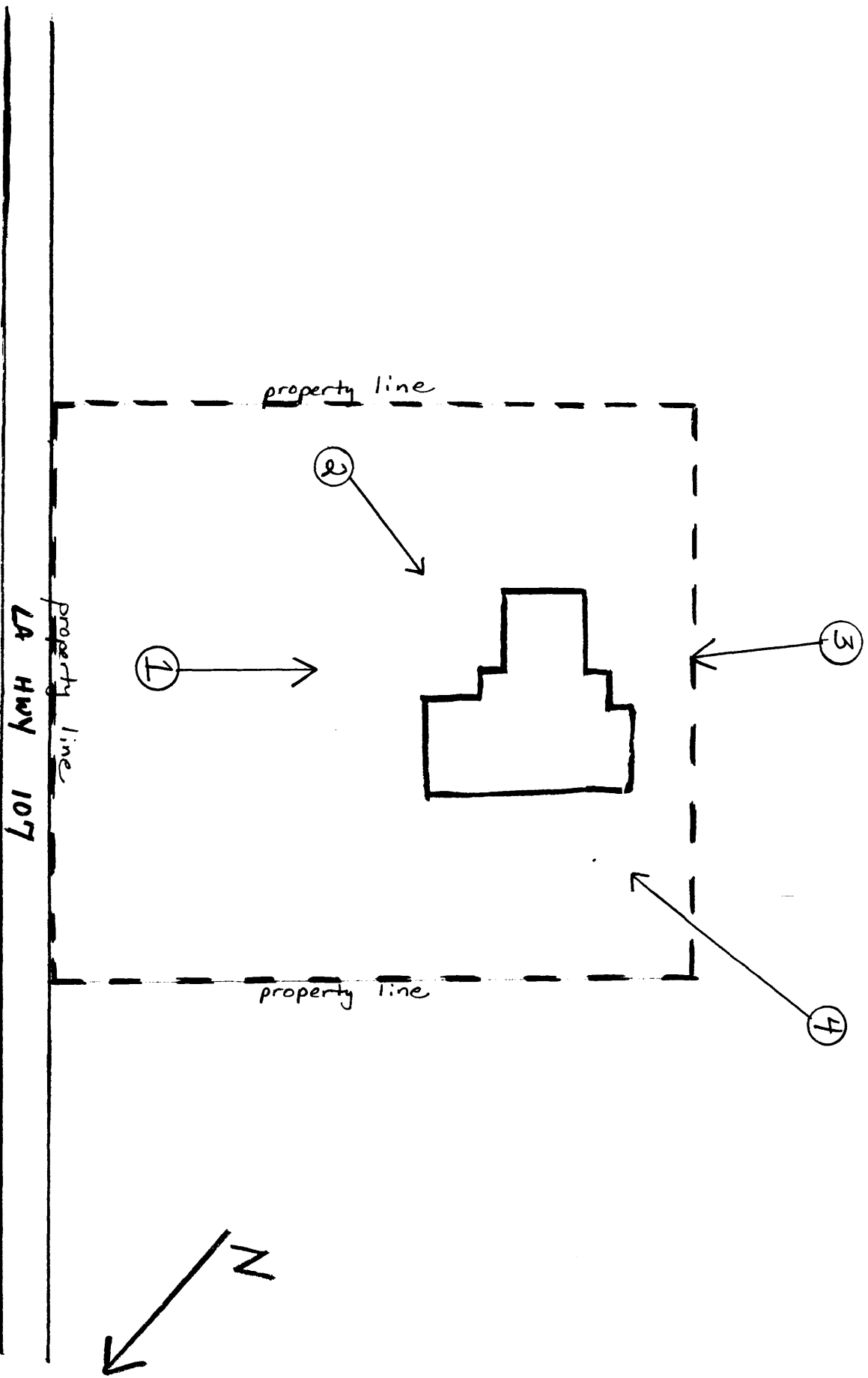
By contrast, a parochial school such as the one at St. Paul Lutheran Church provided a good education with trained, motivated teachers. Indeed, schools run by religious denominations and those supported by private philanthropic funds (such as the Rosenwald schools of the 1920s) were about the only bright spots in black education in rural Louisiana from the end of Reconstruction until the post-World II period.

St. Paul operated as a combination church and school from the very beginning. The present building's predecessor was completed in 1899 with Reverend William Pretzch of Brooklyn as the first pastor and teacher. This building was replaced with the current one in 1916, with classes being held in the wing as well as the church proper. Most of the information about the school comes from interviews with older citizens of Lutherville who were educated there in the 1920s and '30s. Also, there are some records showing the enrollment and subjects taught.

It is clear that Lutherville blacks received a quality education at St. Paul, especially when one considers the alternatives. Initially grades 1 - 7 were taught, but the eighth was added in the late 1920s. Teachers were sent by the Lutheran Mission Board and were usually pastor and teacher. Two individuals particularly remembered by former students were Reverend and Mrs. Calvin Peter Thompson, both graduates of a Lutheran "normal school" in New Orleans. School was full-term and lasted all day. Subjects taught were the usual basics such as history, geography, language and arithmetic. By the 1928-29 term (the last year shown in extant records), there were 72 students. The school served principally the black community of Lutherville (which took its name from the church), but former students indicate that there were also some children from nearby Mansura and Marksville (each about two miles away). Whether there were educational opportunities for blacks in these two communities is unclear, but suffice it to say that St. Paul was certainly the only black school in the immediate Lutherville area. The enrollment figures alone (peaking at about 80) speak to the local educational impact of this small rural school.

NB: The ending date for the period of significance is the late-1930s when the church ceased to be a school. Interviews with former students failed to yield the exact year in the late-1930s.

St. Paul Lutheran Church
Ayoalles Parish, LA



1" = 50'